



Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

Lee Holloway
Chairman of the Board

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SERTA VOTE IGNORES RESIDENTS WHO DEPEND ON MCTS *Chairman Holloway votes against preliminary engineering for commuter rail line*

Milwaukee, WI – Milwaukee County Board Chairman Lee Holloway released the following statement after the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Transit Authority (SERTA) voted 7-2 to submit a Federal New Starts application for preliminary engineering on the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee (KRM) commuter rail line:

“Today, the SERTA voted to advance this application at a time when the Milwaukee County Transit System lacks a dedicated funding source. The Governor’s veto of dedicated funding, the inaction of the State Legislature, and County Executive Scott Walker’s objection to a dedicated sales tax for transit are putting our riders in jeopardy. Over the objections of the County Executive, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors has led the fight to secure a dedicated funding source for the Milwaukee County Transit System. The voters have endorsed taking transit off the property tax as a long-term solution to the funding crisis in transit.

“Supervisor Michael Mayo, Sr., and I, who are the Milwaukee County representatives on SERTA, voted against this application because we place a higher priority on the existing bus system. A minority report will be included with the federal application. In good conscience, we could not vote to prioritize commuter rail service over the bus system.

“I am particularly disappointed that the two SERTA members appointed by Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett voted to support the KRM application without dedicated funding for MCTS. Approximately 88% of MCTS boardings occur in the City of Milwaukee. We cannot leave vulnerable Milwaukee residents in the dust. According to projections released by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, 75% of the KRM’s riders will use an automobile to access the KRM rail stations. Taking commuter rail is a lifestyle choice that shouldn’t play second fiddle to the needs of those who depend on the Milwaukee County bus system, including the poor, seniors, students and individuals with disabilities.

“It was my wish that we all could have been in the ship together and agreed to advance the region's transportation requests to the federal government with a clear voice. Mayor Barrett and County Executive Walker should deliver to our residents their long-term solutions for the rubber-tire mass transit system in Milwaukee County.”

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